

Virginia

Standards of Learning Assessments for the 2001 History and Social Science Standards of Learning

Civics and Economics Test Blueprint

**This revised blueprint will be effective with the administration
of the 2003-2004 History and Social Science
Standards of Learning Tests.**

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Civics and Economics Blueprint

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Standards of Learning Test Blueprint Introduction

What is a test blueprint?

A test blueprint is a guide for test construction and use. The Standards of Learning test blueprints serve a number of purposes. One, they serve as a guide to test developers as they write test questions and construct the Standards of Learning tests. Two, they serve as a guide to educators, parents, and students in that they show (a) the Standards of Learning covered by the test and which, if any, have been excluded; (b) which Standards of Learning are assigned to each reporting category; (c) the number of test items in each reporting category and on the total test; (d) general information about how the test questions are constructed; and (e) the materials that students are allowed to use while taking the test.

How is the test blueprint organized?

There is a blueprint for each test (e.g., grade 3 English, grade 5 mathematics, grade 8 science, Virginia and United States History). Each blueprint contains the following information:

1. **Test Development Guidelines:** guidelines used by Harcourt Educational Measurement and the members of the Content Review Committees in developing the Standards of Learning tests. This section contains three parts:
 - A. General Considerations – lists general considerations that are used in developing the test as well as considerations specific to a particular content area.
 - B. Item Format - lists information on how items for the test are constructed.
 - C. Ancillary Materials - lists any materials (e.g., calculators, rulers, protractors, compasses, dictionaries) that students are allowed to use while taking each test.
2. **Blueprint Summary Table:** a summary of the blueprint which displays the following information:
 - reporting categories for each test;
 - number of test items in each category;
 - Standards of Learning included in each reporting category. Standards of Learning are identified by their numbers and letters;
 - Standards of Learning which are excluded from the Standards of Learning test;
 - number of operational items on the test;
 - number of field-test items on the test; and
 - total number of items (operational and field-test items) on the test.
3. **Expanded Blueprint:** provides the same information as the Blueprint Summary Table except that the full text of each Standard of Learning is included. In addition, Standards of Learning that are excluded from the test are categorized by the reason they were not included.

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What is a reporting category?

Each test covers a number of Standards of Learning. In the test blueprint, Standards of Learning are grouped into categories that address related content and skills. These categories are labeled Reporting Categories. For example, a Reporting Category for the Civics and Economics Standards of Learning test is “Rights and Responsibilities of American Citizenship.” Each of the Standards of Learning in this reporting category addresses the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship and the personal traits that foster participation in civic life. When the results of the Standards of Learning tests are reported, the scores will be presented in terms of scores for each Reporting Category and a total test score.

Are some Standards of Learning assigned to more than one reporting category?

In the Civics and Economics Standards of Learning test, all letters under a particular Standard of Learning are coded to the same reporting category. Each standard, as well as each letter under a standard, is assigned to only one reporting category.

Why are some Standards of Learning not tested on the Standards of Learning tests?

In some content areas, there are Standards of Learning that do not lend themselves to multiple-choice testing. For example, in Civics and Economics, Standard of Learning CE.1f cannot be appropriately assessed in a multiple-choice format.

At the end of the blueprint for each test, the Standards of Learning not tested are listed in “Standards of Learning Excluded from Testing.” In the expanded blueprint the Standards of Learning excluded from testing are categorized by the reason they are not tested.

Will all Standards of Learning listed in the blueprint be assessed each time the Standards of Learning tests are given?

Due to the large number of Standards of Learning in a content area for a grade span, *every* Standard of Learning will not be assessed on every Standards of Learning test form. By necessity, to keep the length of a test reasonable, each test will sample from the Standards of Learning within a reporting category. However, every Standard of Learning is eligible for inclusion on each form of a Standards of Learning test.

Civics and Economics

Test Development Guidelines

A. General Considerations

1. All items included in this test will address the knowledge and skills specified in the 2001 Virginia Standards of Learning in History and Social Science for Civics and Economics.
2. The items will be free of stereotyping or bias directed at a particular age, gender, economic status, racial, ethnic or religious group, or geographic region.
3. The test will **not** be timed.
4. There is no penalty for guessing. Students will be scored on the number of correct answers out of the total number of operational items on the test.
5. Where appropriate, “real-life” examples and situations that the student would likely encounter will be used to present data or ask questions.
6. Items will be grade-appropriate in terms of difficulty, interest, and reading level.
7. Information will be presented through written text and/or through visual materials, such as graphs, charts, maps, cartoons, or other illustrations.
8. Only one item will be linked to a piece of written text, or a graph, chart, map, cartoon, or other illustration.
9. When acronyms are used, both the complete name and the acronym will be given in most cases, for example, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

B. Item Format

1. Each item will be a multiple-choice item containing four choices. Choices such as “None of the above,” “All of the above,” and “Not here” will **not** be used.
2. Answer choices will be arranged vertically beneath the item stems unless space considerations prevent such an arrangement.
3. Item stems will be in the form of questions or in the form of sentences that require completion.
4. Numerical answer choices, such as dates, will be arranged in ascending order.
5. Graphic displays, their corresponding questions, and response choices will appear on the same or facing pages.
6. Artwork accompanying items will be placed above the question unless, for clarity, the size or format of the artwork lends itself to another arrangement.
7. Negative words in the item stem (*i.e.*, “not,” “least,” “except”) will be emphasized by italics, boldface type, underlining, or capital letters.

C. Ancillary Materials

A blank sheet of white paper.

Civics and Economics Blueprint Summary Table

Reporting Category	Number of Items	Civics and Economics Standards of Learning
Standards of Learning CE.1a-e will be assessed throughout the reporting categories based on content links within the Curriculum Framework.		
Principles and Structure of American Constitutional Government	13	CE.2a-c CE.6a-d CE.7a-d CE.8a-d
Rights and Responsibilities of American Citizenship	5	CE.3a-e CE.4a-e
Political Processes	7	CE.5a-f
Economic Principles and Systems	5	CE.9a-c
United States Economy	5	CE.10a-d CE.12a-d
The Role of Government in the Economy	5	CE.11a-e
Standards of Learning Excluded from This Test: CE.1f-g.		
Total Number of Operational Items		40
Field-Test Items*		10
Total Number of Items		50

* Field-test items will not be used to compute students' scores on the test.

Expanded Blueprint

Civics and Economics

Civics and Economics Standards of Learning CE.1a-e will be assessed throughout the reporting categories based on content links from the Curriculum Framework.

Reporting Category: Principles and Structure of American Constitutional Government Number of Items: 13

Civics and Economics Standards of Learning in This Reporting Category:

- CE.2 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of American constitutional government by
- a) explaining the fundamental principles of consent of the governed, limited government, rule of law, democracy, and representative government;
 - b) explaining the significance of the charters of the Virginia Company of London, the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, and the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights;
 - c) identifying the purposes for the Constitution of the United States as they are stated in its Preamble.
- CE.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the American constitutional government by
- a) explaining the relationship of state governments to the national government in the federal system;
 - b) describing the structure and powers of local, state, and national governments;
 - c) explaining the principle of separation of powers and the operation of checks and balances;
 - d) identifying the procedures for amending the Constitution of the United States.
- CE.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of how public policy is made at the local, state, and national levels of government by
- a) explaining the lawmaking process;
 - b) describing the roles and powers of the executive branch;
 - c) examining the impact of the media on public opinion and public policy;
 - d) describing how individuals and interest groups influence public policy.
- CE.8 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the judicial systems established by the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States by
- a) describing the organization and jurisdiction of federal and state courts;
 - b) describing the exercise of judicial review;
 - c) explaining court proceedings in civil and criminal cases;
 - d) explaining how due process protections seek to ensure justice.

Reporting Category: Rights and Responsibilities of American Citizenship Number of Items: 5

Civics and Economics Standards of Learning in This Reporting Category:

- CE.3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of citizenship and the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens by
- a) describing the processes by which an individual becomes a citizen of the United States;
 - b) describing the First Amendment freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition, and the rights guaranteed by due process and equal protection of the laws;
 - c) describing the duties of citizenship, including obeying the laws, paying taxes, defending the nation, and serving in court;
 - d) examining the responsibilities of citizenship, including registering and voting, communicating with government officials, participating in political campaigns, keeping informed about current issues, and respecting differing opinions in a diverse society;
 - e) evaluating how civic and social duties address community needs and serve the public good.
- CE.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life by
- a) practicing trustworthiness and honesty;
 - b) practicing courtesy and respect for the rights of others;
 - c) practicing responsibility, accountability, and self-reliance;
 - d) practicing respect for the law;
 - e) practicing patriotism.

Reporting Category: Political Processes Number of Items: 7

Civics and Economics Standards of Learning in This Reporting Category:

- CE.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political process at the local, state, and national levels of government by
- a) describing the functions of political parties;
 - b) comparing the similarities and differences of political parties;
 - c) analyzing campaigns for elective office, with emphasis on the role of the media;
 - d) examining the role of campaign contributions and costs;
 - e) describing voter registration and participation;
 - f) describing the role of the Electoral College in the election of the President and Vice President.

Reporting Category: Economic Principles and Systems Number of Items: 5

Civics and Economics Standards of Learning in This Reporting Category:

- CE.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of how economic decisions are made in the marketplace by
- a) applying the concepts of scarcity, resources, choice, opportunity cost, price, incentives, supply and demand, production, and consumption;
 - b) comparing the differences among free market, command, and mixed economies;
 - c) describing the characteristics of the United States economy, including free markets, private property, profit, and competition.

Reporting Category: United States Economy Number of Items: 5

- CE.10 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the structure and operation of the United States economy by
- a) describing the types of business organizations and the role of entrepreneurship;
 - b) explaining the circular flow that shows how consumers (households), businesses (producers), and markets interact;
 - c) explaining how financial institutions encourage saving and investing;
 - d) examining the relationship of Virginia and the United States to the global economy, with emphasis on the impact of technological innovations.
- CE.12 The student will demonstrate knowledge of career opportunities by
- a) identifying talents, interests, and aspirations that influence career choice;
 - b) identifying attitudes and behaviors that strengthen the individual work ethic and promote career success;
 - c) identifying skills and education that careers require;
 - d) examining the impact of technological change on career opportunities.

Reporting Category: The Role of Government in the Economy Number of Items: 5

- CE.11 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of government in the United States economy by
- a) examining competition in the marketplace;
 - b) explaining the creation of public goods and services;
 - c) describing the impact of taxation, including an understanding of the reasons for the 16th amendment, spending, and borrowing;
 - d) explaining how the Federal Reserve System regulates the money supply;
 - e) describing the protection of consumer rights and property rights.

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Civics and Economics Standards of Learning Excluded from This Test:
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- CE.1 The student will develop the social studies skills citizenship requires, including the ability to
- f) identify a problem and recommend solutions;
 - g) select and defend positions in writing, discussion, and debate.